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SERVICE NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The NEWS is intended to inform staff members of developments within the Service, and is not for distribution to others.

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SCS STATISTICS

Detailed conservation plans for nearly 50,000,000 acres of land had been completed by the Service as of June 30, 1939, according to R. L. McGrath, head of the records and statistics section of the division of farm planning and management. A summary of the status of this phase of the program follows:

<u>TYPE OF PLAN</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>ACRES</u>
Soil conservation districts (farms & ranches)	6,858	1,828,345
Demonstration & watershed projects (farms & ranches)	26,138	9,326,517
Land utilization ¹	105	7,460,395
CCC erosion camps (farms & ranches)	45,238	9,486,792
Water facilities (farms & ranches)	345	209,348
Extension SCS - demonstrations (farms & ranches) ²	1,607	1,311,448
Roadside erosion control	466	
Public land ³	78	17,951,612
Other type ⁴	590	602,514
	81,425	48,176,971

¹Includes total acreage on projects for which obligations for purchase have been incurred.

²Exclusive of Regions 3 and 5.

³Includes working agreements on Indian Service lands, Forest Service lands, etc.

⁴Includes detailed plans developed for state colleges, Farm Security Administration, and other public agencies.

RESEARCH CHIEF TO RETURN IMMEDIATELY

From Beirut, Syria, W. C. Lowdermilk, chief of research, cabled last week that he would take the first available boat back to the United States. Tentative plans would place him in New York on October 8. The previous week Dr. Lowdermilk had cabled his intention of following an itinerary which would take him through Turkey, the Balkan area, and southern Germany on his homeward journey. On the outbreak of war in Europe, this part of his trip was cancelled.

For the past thirteen months the chief of research has been studying erosion and its control across the Atlantic. His route lay through England, Scotland, Holland, France, Italy, north Africa, and the Near East.

Articles by Dr. Lowdermilk on phases of his studies in north Africa have appeared in American Forests for June, July, and August of this year.

PAN-AMERICA INTERESTED IN SOIL CONSERVATION

Pan-American interest in soil conservation was indicated by the following statement of Lorenzo R. Patino, delegate from the National Irrigation Commission of Mexico, at the recent Pacific Soil Congress in California:

"It is desired that this Honorable Congress would transmit to the Pan-American Union, with its seat in Washington, the resolutions taken in regard to soil erosion, in order that these might be published both in Spanish and Portuguese, and thus made available to Governments that form part of this international institution above mentioned, and that the Union would extend a formal invitation to these Governments to make their budgets to provide the amounts necessary for the establishment of offices to be devoted to the study of soil erosion in each and every one of these countries, to the benefit of all the American nations."

WPA FUNDS ALLOTTED

All applications for WPA funds for both SCS and LU work except 20 have been approved and funds have been made available. Of the 20 applications awaiting approval, five have not yet been signed by the State Administrators, one is being reviewed by Washington WPA officials, nine await clearance by the Bureau of the Budget, and five await the President's signature.

LIBRARY REGULATIONS

Due to difficulty in locating books charged to individuals on vacation, Mildred C. Benton, Librarian, calls attention to the following quotation from Paragraph 4228 of the U. S. D. A. Regulations:

"Employees in Washington, D. C., having in their possession any books or periodicals belonging to or borrowed through the Department Library or any of its branches, who may leave the city for periods of one week or more, shall return the books or periodicals, or, if they are needed for general office use, shall place them in the care of some one who will be able to return them when called for by the library. In the latter case the library shall be notified in advance of the arrangement and informed of the name of the person who will have the care of the books or periodicals.

"Books or periodicals belonging to or borrowed through the Department library or any of its branches shall not under any circumstances be kept in locked desks, left at home, or kept in any place where they will not be readily accessible for Department use. No books or periodicals belonging to or borrowed through the Department library or any of its branches shall be taken out of the city without first obtaining the permission of the Department librarian."

Miss Benton points out that observance of these regulations will bring about better library service.

DISTRICTS ORGANIZED TO COMBAT SAND DUNE ACTIVITY

Soil conservation districts have been organized at Benton Harbor, Grand Haven, and Muskingum on the western shore of Michigan to stabilize active sand dunes which are sweeping inland from the lake shore.

Threatened communities, which heretofore have attempted to combat the danger with the aid of WPA labor, are taking advantage of the soil conservation districts law to organize districts and obtain expert advice on the best means of stabilizing the dunes. Vegetative measures, particularly beach grass, have been extensively used to control wind erosion along the shores of Lake Michigan.

NEW SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Soil Conservation Service directory just issued contains a personnel list of key men in Washington and the field, as well as maps

showing the localities in which the various phases of the land use program are being carried forward. The following maps are included:

- Soil conservation districts
- Demonstration projects
- CCC work areas
- Demonstration farms
- Land purchase projects
- Water facilities projects
- Research
- Administration

Copies may be obtained on request from E. G. Rogers, distribution unit, division of information.

SCS MAN GETS LITTAUER CONSULTANTSHIP

Hyde G. Buller has accepted a Littauer Resident Consultantship at Harvard University for 1939-40. Mr. Buller is a technical specialist in the division of project organization. His studies will cover various aspects of the field of public institutional adjustment, including public finance, taxation, economics and sociology.

The Littauer Fellowships and Consultantships are offered by the Harvard Graduate School of Public Administration to students who have completed one or more years of graduate study in the social sciences. They are designed primarily to provide a background of public administration in its broader phases and offer a thorough grounding in the fundamental principles and problems of public administration.

Because the Graduate School encourages a continuing interchange between the University and the public service, preference is given to applicants who have had practical experience in the government service.

FARMERS' OPINIONS ON SOIL CONSERVATION MEASURES

An attempt has been made by the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station to check the effectiveness of the soil and water conservation program in southern Iowa by a survey of farmers themselves. The results of this study have recently been published as Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 381, "The Farmer Looks at Soil Conservation in Southern Iowa."

Among the topics discussed are: has soil conservation increased the productivity and value of the farm, the effect of the soil conservation program upon the livestock system, and how the Soil Conservation Service helped cooperating farmers control erosion on their farms.

The Bulletin is available in Washington and regional libraries.

LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report of the library shows:

Books acquired	662
Pamphlets acquired	342
Continuations acquired	939
Requisitions handled	1,226
Volumes bound	224
Books circulated	5,382
Periodicals circulated	46,567

The acquisition of 1,943 items for the year brings the total resources of the library to 6,238 books and pamphlets and 597 reprints.

A collection of college catalogues is being brought up to date. Responsibility for collecting maps has been transferred to the cartographic division.

BOOK ON FARM FORESTRY

The American Forestry Association has just published "The Forest Manager" by Karl Dannecker. This book is a translation of a German forestry classic, describing the application of forest management to privately owned forest lands, based on years of experience in Germany.

"The Forest Manager," which applies in a surprising degree to the farm woodland problem in the United States, is available in SCS Washington and regional libraries.

John F. Preston, chief of the forestry division, declares that there is no other publication in English which covers the same field. He says it will be particularly valuable in focusing the attention of our foresters upon the intensive silvicultural measures needed in the development of the new farm forestry program. Mr. Preston recommends that every SCS forester read it.

WISCONSIN OBSERVES SOIL EROSION WEEK

Governor Heil of Wisconsin recently designated September 3 to 9 "Soil Erosion Week" in his state.

In his proclamation the Governor stated that "approximately one-half of the state's 35,000,000 acres of land are subjected to erosion by rain and wind." He pointed out that "state and federal conservation services and agricultural agencies are prepared to demonstrate to the public their various projects designed to conserve natural resources and to bring about desirable physical adjustments in land use."

Ten districts, including about 750,000 acres, have been organized in Wisconsin. There are 13 CCC camps and 7 demonstration projects in the state.

NURSERY CHIEF VISITS REGIONS

Charles R. Enlow, chief of the nursery division, has just returned from a two-months' trip through Regions 9, 6, 4, and 5, where he inspected the districts work, the LU program, and economic work in general.

Mr. Enlow was particularly impressed with the LU program in Montana. On LU projects 18,000 acres have been seeded to crested wheat grass, an excellent revegetation grass for that region. Farmers in the state have seeded 24,000 acres to crested wheat grass.

In commenting on the districts program, Mr. Enlow remarked that almost everywhere he found waiting lists of farmers whose applications for agreements have not yet been prepared. In Konawa, Oklahoma, he reports, there are over 300 on the waiting list.

SIXTH PACIFIC SOIL CONFERENCE

E. A. Norton, chief of the physical surveys division, who attended the recent Pacific Soil Congress in California, reports that active interest in soil conservation was displayed by the delegates from all the Pacific countries represented. The Government of Mexico has been sponsoring conservation work for more than 20 years.

Among the countries represented were Samoa, Sumatra, New Zealand, Australia, China, and Japan as well as Canada and the Central and South American countries.

Mr. Norton discussed "Classes of Land According to Use Capabilities."

SOIL CONSERVATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

D. J. Gardner, extension officer, Union of South Africa, tells of the interest of South African conservationists in the U. S. Soil Conservation Service programs. In a recent letter to C. L. Hamilton of the engineering division he says:

"The idea of contouring is spreading rapidly, and farmers as well as officials are watching the progress and development of your Service very closely. We are trying to mould our schemes on your experiences and improving them as you are advancing with new developments."

While in the United States last year to study soil and water conservation measures, Mr. Gardner was accompanied by Mr. Hamilton on an inspection trip through camp areas and projects in Virginia.

PRINTERS' INK

"The Use of Crop Residues for Soil and Moisture Conservation" is the title of an article in the August issue of the Journal of the American Society of Agronomy. The authors are F. L. Duley, project supervisor at Lincoln, Nebraska, and J. C. Russel of the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station.

Although the experiments discussed are to be considered of a preliminary nature, the authors conclude that crop residues left on the ground would have the following beneficial effects: (a) greatly increase infiltration and thereby reduce the amount of runoff; (b) reduce evaporation from the surface soil; (c) reduce the amount of water erosion; and (d) reduce the amount of wind erosion.

American Forests for September contains the third of a series of articles by W. C. Lowdermilk, chief of research, on the part soil erosion played in the crumbling of the Roman Empire in Africa.

This article entitled "Control of Little Waters in North Africa" tells how ancient Roman works to control little waters guide and serve present-day conservationists. The control works discussed comprise check dams, terrace walls, field cisterns, water development and aqueducts for villages and cities.

According to Dr. Lowdermilk's findings, the passing of agriculture in north Africa is due, not to change of climate as long supposed, but to short-sighted land use. It is interesting to note that the French Government, in carrying out a program of agriculture equal to the land capacity, has been rehabilitating and using the old Roman constructions.

An article entitled "A Method of Preparing Some Native Grass Seeds for Handling and Seeding" which appears in the August issue of the Journal of the American Society of Agronomy is a contribution of the SCS nursery division on work done at Mandan, N. D., in cooperation with the Bureau of Plant Industry.

The method by which awns and hairs were removed from seed, and the results on the various species processed are discussed.

LAND ACQUISITION CONFERENCE

At a land acquisition conference held at Washington, D. C., August 21-26, representatives of the Washington and regional offices familiar with the work of land acquisition discussed principles and ethics of appraisals, and regulations covering title clearances and final payment for the land.

MISSING LIBRARY BOOKS

Have you seen the following publications on someone's desk? The library reports them "missing," i.e. borrowed by SCS personnel and not returned. Any information regarding them will be appreciated.

Lyon, Thomas Lyttleton: "The Nature and Property of Soils."
3d ed. 1937

Twenhofel, William Henry: "Treatise on Sedimentation"

Vermont Public Service Commission, Advisory Committee of Engineers: "Report of Advisory Committee of Engineers on Flood Control." 1928.

NOTES

Ernest G. Holt, head of the biology division will spend the next three weeks visiting wildlife projects in Regions 6, 8, 4, and 2. Aldo Leopold, professor of game management at the University of Wisconsin and a collaborator of the Service, will accompany Mr. Holt to appraise the work and offer suggestions.

Professor Leopold, who is often referred to as the dean of American game management, has been interested in the work of the Service for years. He was of considerable assistance in getting the Coon Valley project under way.

F. G. Renner, chief of the range conservation division, left on August 28 for Region 8 where he will attend a regional range meeting, inspect field operations on range lands, and discuss general activities with members of the regional staff and area conservationists.

W. C. Cochran, who has been for several years on the research staff of the Rothamsted Experimental Station, England, has been appointed

a faculty member at Iowa State College, Ames. He will also serve on the staff of the Iowa Experiment Station.

F. J. Crider, head of the nurseries division, just returned from Region 5 where he spent two weeks reviewing the work of the nurseries as it relates to the general field programs in that region. He was accompanied by David Stephens, liaison officer between SCS and the Bureau of Plant Industry, and Olaf Aamodt, in charge of forage crops and diseases of the B. P. I.

Walter M. Russell, principal engineer, technical operations, who has been on sick leave since July 7, has returned to duty.

Vaughan Ferguson and J. D. McKell, of the personnel staffs of Regions 8 and 2 respectively, are on temporary detail to the Washington office to assist with organization work.

AGRICULTURAL AWARDS

The Jury of Awards of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers will accept from members of the Society up to October 1, 1939, nominations of candidates for the Deere and McCormick gold medals for 1940.

The John Deere medal is awarded for "distinguished achievements in the application of science and art to the soil." This is interpreted to cover more than a mechanistic concept of engineering, and to include physics, chemistry, biology, and any other science and art involving the soil.

The Cyrus Hall McCormick medal is awarded for "exceptional and meritorious engineering achievement in agriculture," the citation being interpreted to mean the total achievements of a continuing career or any single item of engineering achievement.

PERSONNEL TRANSFERS

Recent personnel changes in the Service are:

William F. Watkins of the states relations division transferred to the BAE.

C. G. Swain of the personnel division has been appointed director of personnel for the Weather Bureau.

Charles F. Swingle of the Washington nursery division will have charge of nurseries at Manhattan, Kansas.

William Giles, formerly of Manhattan, Kansas, will have charge of the nurseries unit at Beltsville, Md.

Melville H. Cohee becomes head of the program procedures division.

Thew D. Johnson, who represented the BAE in flood control survey work, transferred to the program procedures division.

James L. Buckley, head of the classifications and employment unit, becomes head of the classification section of the Department personnel division.

H. C. Mesch has been appointed head of the safety and health section of the personnel division.

IOWA HILLCULTURE FIELD DAY

The annual Field Day of the Iowa Hillculture Experimental Farm was held on September 1 at Floris, Iowa. J. M. Aikman, project leader, and his associates conducted visitors over the numerous experimental hillculture plots on the 189 acre farm and explained the work and its objectives.

S. B. Detwiler, head of the hillculture division addressed the group on "The Aim of Hillculture Research." Other speakers were Forrest G. Bell, liaison officer for Region 5, Charles Harward of the Southern Iowa Hillculture Committee, and faculty members of the Iowa State College.

ORCHARD CONFERENCE, BENTON HARBOR, MICH.

The place of cover crops and mulching in erosion control on orchards was discussed at an orchard conference held at Benton Harbor, Michigan, August 29-September 1.

The conferees visited the Benton Harbor project and some experiment stations in Michigan where horticultural investigations are being conducted.

MEETING OF AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS

The annual meetings of North Atlantic Section of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers will be held September 12-15 at Farmingdale, Long Island, N. Y.